

"DEDICATED TO FREEDOM OF THE ROAD"



6-7-2011

ABATE of Michigan, Inc.

P.O. Box 309 - Milford, Mi. 48381-0309

To: Senate Transportation Committee

From: Vince Consiglio, President, ABATE of Michigan

RE: SB 291

Dear Senators,

Thank you for hearing SB 291 today. No state surrounding Michigan has a mandatory helmet law. I have ridden over 900,000 miles on motorcycles. A helmet does not prevent an accident. Each year, I vacation in a "FREE" state. Michigan could gain 1.2 billion dollars by changing this requirement. With the cost of gas, motorcyclists have the ways and means to come to Michigan. Give them some incentive.

AAA has been busy fighting this bill. Why? Do they care about motorcycle safety? Heck no. They are afraid of a repeal of the seat belt law. A helmet is personal protection gear; a seat belt is a vehicle restraint. They say that car insurance will increase with the repeal. Did it go down because of the helmet law? Have any of the 30 states that have repealed raised car insurance? No. Didn't they say the same thing when the speed limit went up. In fact, Michigan motorcyclists over pay into the catastrophic fund. We pay for every vehicle. But if you are run off the road, hit a deer, or another motorcycle, you are not able to collect from the catastrophic fund.

I am very proud of ABATE's support and continued involvement in motorcycle safety. We have worked very hard in the past 30 years to keep this program active and very reasonable for new motorcyclists. Between 30-40% of all motorcyclist fatalities in Michigan are unlicensed motorcycle riders. This is true from 1989 to the present. Federal funds in Michigan could be better spent on getting riders a cycle endorsement, and on car driver awareness of cyclists instead of "Click it or Ticket" programs.

SB 291 provides incentive for motorcyclist's to get a cycle endorsement. By having an endorsement or by taking a motorcycle safety classes, the cyclists over the age of 20 will be able to make an adult choice on his or her motorcycle gear.

Thank You, Vince Consiglio.